

ALBION



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ALBION is a journal of postal Diplomacy, edited and published by Don Turnbull, 6 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire, England.

Game fees for all ALBION games are announced at the start of such games. To non-players, subscriptions are available at 1/- per issue (British Isles and Ireland), 25 cents per issue (U.S.A. and elsewhere). Both figures include postage.

All-for-all trade with other postal Diplomacy magazines; this activity is limited to those magazines appearing on the current trades list only. It is hoped that trade arrangements may be expanded in the future.

ALBION records the progress of postal Diplomacy games taking place within the British Region of AHIKS, or within the area covered by the British region, AHIKS membership apart. American players may participate in certain games which run on longer deadlines than normal. ALBION 69/3, the Hyperspace variant, was to have been such a game; however response has as yet been insufficient for this game, and if it ever does start, it will be ALBION 70/1. Three positions are still open; please apply to the editor.

DIPLOMACY is a game manufactured and sold by Games Research Inc., 48 Wareham Street, Boston, Mass. 02118, U.S.A. For availability within the British Isles consult the editor. A local purchase may be possible around this time of year.

Cover by George Forster.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS!!!!

So, in spite of all the grim forecasts to the contrary, ALBION reaches double figures. This numerical maturity is hard to reconcile with the immature, childish nature of the contents - a factor of ALBION that has remained constant ever since the first issue. The only one that has remained constant, indeed. This goes to show that Dad is always a child at heart, and it was with great reluctance that I dragged myself away from my son's Christmas gifts to type this. As I do so, he watches with quiet pity from the armchair, a cloud of blue cigar smoke round his head, which is swimming after the enormous quantity of hooch he has imbibed. The electric, automatic Diplomacy player is the best toy he has had for some years.....

I must draw your attention to our cover this time (it is only temporary). The colour printing was carried out on a Roneo machine, the stencils being produced by the Roneotronic. It isn't professional, but it's not bad as a first effort. In normal circumstances, after printing ALBION, my entire person is covered in black duplicating ink. This time the glorious technicolour was a wonder to behold (to those privileged enough to behold it, that is). Why is it that we amateurs get more ink on ourselves than on the stencil copies??

Game Theory Homework Review.

1. The construction of a matrix for this game is merely a matter of estimating Bert's preferences. I think it fair to say that he would prefer to wait himself, rather than keep the girl waiting. Well, what relative values should we allocate to these outcomes? 2 to 1? This seems reasonable; If I were in Bert's position, I would be twice as happy to have to wait myself than to suffer the evening after keeping her waiting.

Right - the values, then, should be in the ratio 2:1. Let's say -2 and -4, then; the payoffs must be negative since they both represent loss of joy to Bert, in one way or another. The other payoffs are easy - i nice neutral zero, since if they both arrive at the same time everything will be hunky dory (so Bert thinks, anyway, poor slob).

The matrix is, therefore:-

		Girl	
		Early	Late
Bert	Early	0	-2
	Late	-4	0

A quick look will verify that there is no saddle point, which is perhaps a bit disappointing for Bert, but quite realistic when one considers the wiles of women.

Work out the odds, and we find that Bert should arrive early twice out of every three dates. The value of the game is found to be $-1\frac{1}{3}$. You didn't really expect Bert to win, did you?

An interesting observation is that the girl's best strategy is to turn up late twice out of every three dates. This may seem to credit her with some nastiness towards Bert; however it is quite realistic, since she plays the role of Nature, and isn't interested in maximising Bert's joy (not outside the cinema anyway) but in maximising her own. And married men will confirm that these are poles apart.

2. Arthur and his broken bottles. This is just as easy from the game theory point of view, but some rather tedious arithmetic has to be done before setting up the matrix.

If he buys for a fine day (i.e. he buys 500 broken bottles and 100 packets of peanuts) he pays out £27-10-0d. If he buys for a wet day (200 bottles and 700 peanuts) he also pays out £27-10-0d. Nice bit of ground work, that.

If he turns up with a wet day's stock and the weather is fine, he will only sell 200 bottles and 100 peanuts, and his profit is a mere £8-15-0d. You will be pleased and perhaps rather surprised to discover that he gets the same profit if he arrives with a fine day's stock and it is pouring down (as it usually does in Manchester).

If he guesses right, however, he is really in the money. On a fine day, his profit will be £16-5-0d on fine day stock.

And if he forecasts rain correctly, his profit soars, like broken bottles, to £31-5-0d.
I am leaving you to work out these profits for yourself - it isn't hard, and most of the work has been done for you.
Therefore the matrix, which shows profits as positive payoffs, is as follows:-

		Weather is:	
		Fine	Wet
He buys for	Fine	16 $\frac{1}{4}$	8 $\frac{3}{4}$
	Wet	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	31 $\frac{1}{4}$

No saddle point, which is why commerce is such a nasty business, even outside Manchester United football ground.

If there had been a saddle point, Arthur would have been forced to a definite single course of action. Since there is not, then a mixed strategy solution exists; Arthur can take some heart from this, since he can, by adroit use of game theory, combat variations in the weather.

We calculate the odds (the figures are a bit awkward here) and find that Arthur's strategies must be played in the ratio $22\frac{1}{2}:7\frac{1}{2}$, or 3:1. (Nice to have the fractions disappearing when the odds are divided by $7\frac{1}{2}$). Therefore, every four times, he stocks up for fine weather three times and wet weather once. The value of the game, which is the most important thing as far as Arthur is concerned, is found to be £14-7-6d. This is therefore his expectation of profit. There is another, rather more realistic way of looking at this result. Instead of varying his purchases of stock week by week, he could invest $\frac{3}{4}$ of his capital in fine-day stock and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ in wet-day stock. (Why $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$? Well, the odds are 3:1). Thus he could buy:-

($\frac{3}{4}$ fine day stock) 375 broken bottles, 75 packets peanuts;
and

($\frac{1}{4}$ wet day stock) 50 broken bottles, 175 packets peanuts.
Total 425 broken bottles and 250 packets of peanuts. This gives him a regular order with the merchant (plus the chance of some discount) plus freedom from throwing two coins every week. (Why should he throw two coins, anyway?)

It doesn't take long to find out that this weekly stock (425 bottles and 250 peanuts) costs him just £27-10-0d., which I hope you will find a reassuring check on the work above. I did.

"Aha", I can just hear you saying, "what will be the solution if Arthur has information on the weather?" Obviously, if there is some reasonably reliable weather forecasting available to Arthur, he should be able to turn it to his own advantage. How? Well, at the moment I will leave the question open. Anyone who wants to submit a solution can consider that a fine day turns up twice out of five days; I will be interested to see what you make of it.

HeeHeeHeeCackleCackleCackle.....

GAME THEORY (Cont).Part 7. 2xm games.

There's nothing like a bit of jargon. When we first introduced the theory, we talked about 2x2 games, i.e. each player of the supposed game had to pick from two available strategies. We are now moving on to consider games in which one player has two strategies but the other has more - we say, in the coy way beloved of mathematicians, that he has m strategies. Hence the title '2xm' games. Abstruse bit of reasoning, that.

Some of the rules we used for 2x2 games continue to apply. The reader, with probably only an inexpert knowledge of what has passed in these pages before, will be reassured by the fact that he is still on partially familiar ground. Of course, there are some new things to consider - otherwise these games would not need a separate section.

The First Rule still applies - ALWAYS LOOK FOR A SADDLE POINT FIRST, for the saddle point occurs in 2xm games with pretty much the same frequency as it does in 2x2 games. Thus, in the following example:-

Example 11.

		Red					
		1	2	3	4	5	
Blue	1	1	3	2	0	1	0*
	2	3	2	-1	-1	2	-1
		3	3	2	0*	2	

there is a clear saddle point, at Blue 1/Red 4. The zero payoff in this position is the largest of the row minima and the smallest of the column maxima, and is therefore the best strategy for both players. It makes the game a fair one, as well, which is nice.

Of course, as expected, some games do not have saddle points. Look at this one, for instance:-

Example 12.

		Red					
		1	2	3	4	5	
Blue	1	1	3	2	2	1	
	2	3	2	-1	-1	2	

The largest of the row minima is 1 (Blue 1); the smallest of the column maxima is 2 (Red 3, 4 and 5). Therefore a saddle point does not exist, and all we have discovered so far is that the value of the game lies somewhere between 1 and 2.

This means, in turn, that a mixed strategy can be found - but how do we apply our established techniques to this 2x5? Let's first have another look at the matrix, and the Red strategies in particular (he has more than Blue, after all).

We see immediately that Red 3 and Red 4 yield the same result. Therefore there's not much point in considering one of these as part of the game at all. The game can be reduced to a 2×4 by omitting Red 4 (either will do).

		Red			
		1	2	3	5
Blue	1	1	3	2	1
	2	3	2	-1	2

Anything more? Yes, there is. Red would be crazy ever to consider playing Red 2, since Red 3 gives him better results whatever Blue plays. This is an example of dominance, where one strategy is said to dominate another. Thus, without harming Red in any way, we can omit Red 2 from the matrix. The game has now been reduced to a 2×3 :-

		Red		
		1	3	5
Blue	1	1	2	1
	2	3	-1	2

Getting easier all the time. Is there another example of dominance? Yes - Red 5 always gives better results to Red than Red 1 (actually equal results against Blue 1, but better against Blue 2). Therefore we can reasonably knock Red 1 out of the matrix, leaving:-

		Red	
		3	5
Blue	1	2	1
	2	-1	2

This is a nice easy 2×2 . The solution follows immediately by normal methods.

Blue plays strategies 1 and 2 in the ratio 3:1.

Red plays strategies 3 and 5 in the ratio 1:3.

The value of the game is $1\frac{1}{4}$.

We should here state the full solution - i.e. we should show that Red's poor strategies are played with frequency zero.

The complete solution for Red is therefore 0:0:1:0:3.

Let's sum up at this point. When dealing with $2 \times n$ games (or $m \times 2$, as you will see):-

1. Look for a saddle point first.
2. Look for any pair of strategies (available to the player with more) which yield equal payoffs against either strategy

- of the other player. If such a pair exists, strike out one of them - it doesn't matter which one. If there are three, of course, you can forget two of them, and so on.
3. If the game has not reduced to a 2x2, look for dominance in the strategies. If, of two strategies available to one player, one yields better results for him than the other, no matter what the opponent plays, strike out the poorer of the two. This process can continue for as long as the conditions are met.
 4. If the game has reduced to a 2x2, solve by normal methods, and account for the missing (deleted) strategies in the solution.
If the game has not reduced to a 2x2, then you need to use a method to be outlined in the next issue.

All the games you will meet in this section of the series will reduce to 2x2, by the methods described. Take this consolation to heart - it won't be with you for much longer.

One final point - the final solution of the game should, of course, be the best solution for both players. In consequence, one player should be able to make some gain if the other makes an error - by playing a strategy which has been shown to be poor, for instance. Just to confirm this, let us try the Blue solution against each Red strategy in turn in example 12.

Blue mix against Red 1 wins for Blue $(3x1+1x3)/4 = 1\frac{1}{2}$.
 Blue mix against Red 2 wins for Blue $(3x3+1x2)/4 = 2\frac{3}{4}$.
 Blue mix against Red 3 wins for Blue $(3x2+1x-1)/4 = 1\frac{1}{4}$.
 Blue mix against Red 4 wins for Blue $(3x2+1x-1)/4 = 1\frac{1}{4}$.
 Blue mix against Red 5 wins for Blue $(3x1+1x2)/4 = 1\frac{1}{4}$.

This confirms our solution. Against the Red strategies in the best Red solution, Blue wins the value of the game, $1\frac{1}{4}$. He also wins this amount against Red 4, since, as we have seen, Red 4 is equivalent to Red 3.

If Red makes an error, however, and plays Red 1, he allows Blue to win more than he should (an extra $\frac{1}{4}$). And if Red feels suicidal and plays Red 2, Blue's winnings soar to $2\frac{3}{4}$ - an extra $1\frac{1}{2}$ for him.

This sort of test is quick to run and valuable in its results, since it confirms the solution already obtained. It is rather a vital process, in fact, when considering the sort of games we are going to meet in the next issue and thereafter.

Before letting you loose on some problems, let's have a look at the case when Blue is the player having the multiple array of strategies, and Red only 2. This is a mx2 game (should one say an mx2 game?).

The matrix is printed on the next page, for reasons of space. This time it is Blue who is looking for dominance in his strategies, so we look HOLD IT, HOLD IT! What about a saddle point? Well, the largest of the row minima is 4 (Blue 4 or 5) and the smallest of the column maxima is 5 (Red 1) so there isn't a saddle point.

Example 13.

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	1	2	5
	2	4	3
	3	3	6
	4	5	4
	5	4	4

Right - are any of the Blue strategies equal in their results? No, but clearly Blue will always prefer Blue 4 to Blue 5, so the latter can be forgotten.

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	1	2	5
	2	4	3
	3	3	6
	4	5	4

Also, Blue 3 is better than Blue 1, so we can remove Blue 1.

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	2	4	3
	3	3	6
	4	5	4

Finally, Blue 4 dominates Blue 2, and the latter joins the dead pile of poor strategies. The resulting matrix is nice:-

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	3	3	6
	4	5	4

This is easily solved to give the result:-

Blue plays in the ratio 0:0:1:3:0.
Red plays in the ratio 2:2, or 1:1.
Value of the game is $4\frac{1}{2}$.

Note two things of importance:-

1. When one strategy is found to dominate another, then the dominant one is removed if it is a Red strategy, and the dominated one is removed if Blue. The reason is fairly simple - Red wants to avoid the high positive payoffs, and hence will remove a dominant strategy (it has higher payoffs than the one it dominates). A similar argument applies for Blue, who of course is interested in the high positive payoffs.

ALBION game review number One.

TACTICAL GAME 3 (Russia 1944).

Published by:- Strategy and Tactics Magazine,
Poultron Press,
Box 4267,
Long Island City,
New York 11104, U.S.A.

Price - 5 dollars, plus postage.

Background.

This is the first to be published of a series of Tactical Games. The complete list is 21 strong, and includes such titles as North Africa 1941, Korea 1950, Europe 1917, Rome 80BC and Greece 300BC. The second game to be published in the series is Deployment (Europe 1800), which is also available from the above publishers, again for 5 dollars. The publication of the remaining games in the Tactical Game series depends, as far as I can gather, on public response to the two already issued.

Presentation.

To those players who are accustomed to the Avalon Hill games, Tactical Game 3 is something of a disappointment in the presentation department. The map is a single sheet of hexagon paper, unmounted and delivered in a mailing tube; care in packing should avoid creasing of the map, and my copy is virtually uncreased. The map is in single colour, woods, hills etc. being represented by 'splash contours' of different shapes. These look a lot better when coloured, using felt pens.

The counters are wafer thin, and the printing is of a rather poor standard, making it difficult to identify some units other than by their combat factors. The counters have been cut from the main sheet in rather a careless way, yielding a series of different shapes and sizes. The thin nature of the counters makes them difficult to handle, and probably easy to lose (and there are no spares).

Luckily there is a very comprehensive list of counters for each side, German and Russian, which assists in identification.

Rules.

The rules are printed out on quarto paper, rather than being assembled in book form. They are full of spelling and grammatical errors, and first reading is constantly interrupted by the need to correct word order, spelling etc.

However the actual contents of the rule sheets are clear and simple enough, and it took us only a short time to get a game set up, and at least know where relevant sections of the rules could be found for reference.

The play.

The rules present the players with a choice of six different tactical situations, each having appropriate units on each side, appropriate objectives etc. Each game situation is described fully with the aid of a copy of the mapboard (small size) and detailed listings of the units required. As an example, we give below the details for game situation 6. This is a clash between reconnaissance units of each side, presumed to be clearing the way for larger units following. Objectives for both sides consist of occupation of town squares.

The German force (a reconnaissance battalion) consists of three StG III assault gun companies, 2 StG HETZER assault gun companies, 12 half-track units, 2 truck units, one 120mm mortar platoon, 3 infantry platoons and an engineer unit. Total 24 counters.

Against this, the Russian force consists of six T34/85 tank companies, three rifle companies, one 82mm mortar company, one 76.2mm anti-tank battery, three half-track units and two truck units. Total 16 counters.

Summing up, the order of battle details are well presented and simple to understand.

Play itself is fast and furious. The combat results table is the simplest we have ever seen (realistic, considering the scale of the engagement), and casualties are heavy. Rules governing movement etc. are quite simple and logical (and brief, which makes a nice change). We found correct initial placement to be of paramount importance; all the game situations last for ten turns or less, and if an error in initial placement has been made, the consequences are almost certain to be serious, and the situation is usually irretrievable in the short time allowed.

Additional complications arise from the fact that each unit has a 'range' factor, as well as the normal combat and movement factors. This determines the distance over which the combat factor of the unit can be applied, and there are various rules governing doubling and tripling of combat factor according to the range used, the type of target etc.

In summary, we found the play very good indeed - what this game lacks on the presentation side is certainly made up for in play itself. Games are short, demand thought and concentration, and proceed at a healthy rate. Our first game lasted barely one hour, including set-up time, and our second was about the same length.

Conclusions.

Poor presentation - perhaps not very good physical value for cash in comparison with AH games. Reasonably clear rules, but with annoying and careless errors in abundance. Play excellent - nearer to a table-top game than AH games usually are. Plenty of variations available to add to the interest. Overall impression - very fair, with room for physical improvement only.

Poultron Press are clearly very interested in the reaction of purchasers to their games. (Indeed, they are much more interested in this aspect than in maintaining customer relations before a purchase is made - a bad policy for a game publisher and magazine publisher). They enclose a detailed questionnaire with the game and request its return. They also give a brief explanation of the concept of these 'test series' games, the reasons for the poor quality of the presentation etc.

They seem to be in danger, in some respects, of going off half-cock. Strategy and Tactics magazine itself is not so dependable nowadays (the November issue which they promised has so far failed to materialise). In addition, their response to letters etc. is terribly slow, if indeed it occurs at all. These factors all add up on the debit side.

However at least one game they have produced is well worth playing, and if the same can be said for the others then there is a definite point on the credit side. As far as the British market is concerned (and probably the U.S. too) there is plenty of demand for such new games, and if the publishers show themselves to react to customers in a properly business-like way, then there should be no reason why they should not make considerable progress.

They have made a bad start, from all accounts. Let us hope they put this matter to rights - if they do they will find almost a captive market.

Pages 9 and 10 of this issue will be circulated to the British region of AHIKS, so that those who do not subscribe to ALBION can see the game report. In addition some copies will be sent to the U.S.A. for circulation among interested AHIKS members there.

DIPLOMACY RULE DISPUTES ETC.

Number 9. The Victory Criterion. Acknowledgement BROB 84.

The rulebook states 'as soon as one player gains a majority of the pieces on the board , he is the winner'. As there are 34 supply centres on the board, each capable of supporting one unit, it is apparent that a player who has 18 units on the board has won the game. However, there can be fewer units actually on the board than there are supply centres. The result is that, in some circumstances, fewer than 18 forces might constitute a majority. Four different sets of criteria have been adopted by one magazine or another, and sometimes they appear in combination.

The four are:-

- A. One player has 18 units actually on the board.
- B. One player controls 18 centres.
- C. One player has the majority of units on the board.
- D. As above in C, except that builds are regarded as part of the Fall move. See below.

A mention should be made of the difference between C and D. In C, the player with the majority wins, whether at the end of the Spring moves, or at the end of the Autumn (Fall) moves, or at the end of the builds (usually called Winter). In D the builds are regarded as part of the Autumn moves; this means that victory can only be declared in Spring or Winter, not in Autumn.

Summary of the views of prominent gamesmasters:

GRAUSTARK and ARMAGEDDONIA use D.

BROBDINGNAG uses C.

EREHWON says 'In order to win, a player must have at least 18 units at the end of a Winter build/removal season'.

For once, ALBION seems to disagree with all these views. The house rules state merely that a player must have 18 units on the board at the end of a move, when all builds and removals have been made.

I think there is some justification for adopting this criterion. However it is with fear and trembling that I approach the subject, since for one I am apparently disagreeing with the 'greats' such as John McCallum, Rod Walker, John Boardman, John Koning etc. However, perhaps John McCallum is not so far from these views as the above summary of BROBDINGNAG's position seems to indicate, since he announces himself as disenchanted with the rule.

The difficulty with the 18-centre rule, as exemplified in B above, is that a player could own 18 centres but be unable to build for them since his home centres were occupied by his own units, or even enemy units. He could thus be declared the winner although he might have much fewer units than other player(s). Apparently no-one uses this version nowadays.

However the only difficulty which arises with the 18-unit rule, as adopted by ALBION, is that, under certain circumstances, a player with 17 units or even less might have a majority, due to blocked supply centres (and the consequence that less than 34 units were on the board after builds). This slight disadvantage seems to me to be much lesser of an evil than the difficulties contained in alternatives C and D, or in EREHWON's stand. As I see it, there is no justification whatever for barring a victory after a Spring move, as EREHWON seems to do. And, in the case of alternatives C and D, let us remember that the idea of a Winter season is not strictly part of the game at all, but is merely inserted to assist in postal administration; therefore to allow its presence to influence the victory situation seems rather pointless and contrary to the rules. At least the 18-unit rule of ALBION is clear and incapable of misinterpretation; if odd cases arise when a majority is attained below the 18 level, then it should be no difficult task for the leader to get to the required victory level in a move or so. I rather suspect that there will be no great difficulty in determining the winner in the vast majority of games, whatever the criterion.

I now sit back and await the cries of anguish from players, subscribers and trade editors alike. No doubt there are good arguments against my system, but I can't spot them at present. Of the alternatives above, I prefer D, marginally, since I regard the creation of the Winter season as an artificiality, brought about merely to assist gamesmasters of postal games. As far as I am concerned, the Winter builds/removals are merely part of the Autumn results.

Loud Howl Of Indignation.

The latest issue of LEBOR GABALA, volume 1 number 3, contains a statement which strikes me as rather unjust.

The subject is the removal of units for a player who does not submit orders telling the gamesmaster which unit to remove. In such circumstances it is common for the gamesmaster to adopt some (rather arbitrary) ruling to determine which unit must be removed, in the absence of any order from the player concerned.

Jeff Key relates the history of this situation, as far as Games Research and Allan Calhamer are concerned. Apparently the numbering of units, now regarded by most gamesmasters as obsolete and not necessary, enters into this, in that the original rules required that the lowest (or highest - I'm not clear which) numbered unit should be the first to be removed in the event of a player dropping out of a game, or otherwise not submitting orders for the removal.

Ah - got it - the rule says that the highest numbered unit should come off first; in the case of a tie, the fleet is removed before the army. This presumably makes the most recently-created unit the one to suffer, and in all likelihood the one nearest home.

For a start, this seems totally unrealistic. Loss of a supply centre means loss of supplies, and I would have thought that the unit with the longest supply line (i.e. generally the one furthest from home) would be hardest hit.

However, the rule was in the rule book at one time, and therefore Jeff quotes it as authority, and adds "Therefore, considering the magnitude of the effect that removal rules have on most games, and considering the resistance we met with concerning our unusual rules, we think that any game which was not played under the correct removal rule, and which required at least one removal by the Gamesmaster, is a variant, and should not be counted on any rating or master point scales."

Sorry, Jeff, but this strikes me as totally unjust. For a start, how many people know the rules for the numbering of units? They are not in the current rule book, as far as I can see. We have had such a situation in ALBION 69/1, in which the player for Great Britain has suddenly and without warning disappeared. I removed two British units in Winter 1903.

As it happens, these were the highest numbered units, since they were the two British fleets, and there had been no British builds since Spring 1901. However this was sheer coincidence, and had the game progressed further, and the British been able to build some extra units, there is no telling what numbered units might have been removed, since ALBION uses a 'distance from home' criterion. Therefore, 69/1 is not a variant according to your assertion; lucky, but there it is.

Surely, however, the distance from home criterion is just what would happen in the case of the collapse of a government? If the British had two armies, in London and Moscow, I can't imagine the Moscow army remaining while that in London was removed. It strikes me that the numbering of units, and the use of these numbers to determine priority for removal, is so much artificiality, created to avoid an awkward situation. I can imagine the rule existing in the pages of the Risk rules, but not in those of Diplomacy. Clearly there is some cause for argument concerning removal criterion, but equally clearly there seems to be no single point in favour of a numbering system.

I tend to look at it this way. A removal criterion is not created in a postal game for any reasons of sticking to the rule book, since in a face-to-face game the walking-out of a player creates many problems - the main one being that the situation isn't accounted for at all (in my book at least). No - it is merely adopted to foil the spoiling effect of players in postal games who, for one reason or another, cease communication. Presumably they were in communication at the start of the game, and therefore have had an opportunity to object to the house rules, and particularly the one concerning removal criteria. Therefore, when they drop out of the game, they are already aware of the changes this will cause the other players' units when the time comes for the removal of forces. Of course, by this time, they couldn't care less what happens to the game.

Therefore the criterion for removals is really nothing to do with the original rules, but is inserted by the gamesmaster in order to let the players see what provision has been made for such an eventuality. It seems to me that no game should be a variant, whatever criterion it uses, since there is no precedent set in the rule books most of us have. I regard the rule as a necessary protection for the players who have remained in the game.

Sorry to go on at such length on this topic, but it seems to be one which is causing a lot of needless argument. I stand to have my neck chopped off, of course, having stuck it out. Any news on this line will be relayed in future issues.

A rather comical situation arises in the issue of LEBOR GABALA referred to, which I will entitle:-

Turnbull makes a mess of it again.

You may recall that, when reporting on THE VOICE in issue 4 of ALBION, I said that five games were being reported in THE VOICE, of which '1968CM is a variant which includes Assyria'.

Jeff Key reports this in LEBOR GABALA, and adds:-

'Unfortunately, 1968CM is not a variant; we can see how Don was misled as he had, at that time, received only three copies of THE VOICE and had walked into the centre of the Assyro-Hungarian Empire's press release series. These press releases concerned the formation of a separate empire within the Austro-Hungarian empire by a person who was not even a player in the game. The idea was to provoke Conrad von Metzke, who was playing Austria, into a press release battle. Conrad, however, refused to rise to the bait and, upon his demise at the hands of Turkey, the same plan was tried upon Larry St. Cyr (Turkey) with even less success. It was at this stage that units of the 'Assyrian Empire' were reported as being on the board in Persia, Armenia, Mesopotamia and Syria. It was these reports which Don read and misled him into believing the game was an eight-man variant. Sorry Don.'

Well, dear reader, is the collective editorial face red! I thought Ashurbanipal (the supposed player for Assyria) was rather a strange name, but then the American Diplomacy magazines are full of strange (to us) names, so I thought nothing of it. (No offence intended, American readers). Ah well, we live and learn.

Letters to ALBION.

After this grandiose heading, it comes as something of a surprise to me to find only one such letter in the files at present. This is from Fred C. Davis Jnr., 5307 Carriage Court, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. Fred asked me for a sample copy of ALBION recently, and wrote giving his comments, after recovering from the shock, that is.

Relevant parts of the letter are printed below, interspersed with editorial comment in the annoying way you all have to get used to.

"Thank you for the sample issue of ALBION. I enjoyed reading it. I'm sorry that I have too many irons in the fire to get into a Diplomacy game in ALBION at this time. Is your 'Hyperspace' game going to permit units to move from any province to any other province?"

** Yes - with the sort of restrictions you would anticipate; i.e. fleets cannot move inland, nor armies out to sea etc. In the ALBION version, hyperspace connections only exist for one move, which I gather is not the case in other variants of the same name. djt **

"I'm enclosing a copy of the original Davis-Walker variant rules, known as Aberration I, currently running in ZOTHIQUE. I created this variant because as a student of geography I couldn't stand some of the geographic absurdities..... Following Aberration I you will find the Abstraction rules and map. I consider that Aberration I was a rough draft, and Abstraction to be the (hopefully) finished product. No magazine is currently running Abstraction. If you would like to run a section, you may do so, providing that you give credit to Rod Walker and I as the inventors. I would strongly advise you not to consider running a section of the original Aberration I game, as you will go crazy trying to adjudicate double fleet moves."

**Fred enclosed the above-mentioned material under separate cover, and these have not arrived at the time of writing; no doubt the Post Office could throw light on this. However, when the rules for Abstraction arrive, I will print them in ALBION and ask readers if they would like to have a shot at this variant. Let's face it - not enough players have yet volunteered for Hyperspace, so we could try another instead. Many thanks, Fred; I look forward to seeing your rules and perhaps trying the game in ALBION. **djt

"You asked for comments and criticism on ALBION. My only criticism was that I found the article on 'Game Theory' rather dull. The rest of the magazine is very good. The cover is excellent. (Sorry about that, Scotland). You have made excellent use of white space in your page make-ups. It's nice to see pages where everything isn't crammed in to make it fit. I presume that you either have your own mimeograph machine or have access to one at minimal rates. Mimeographing rates in the States have shot sky high."

**We hope the game theory articles will liven up when we get to considering more interesting, realistic, and unfortunately difficult games. At present we are just laying the groundwork, without which the reader will be lost when he comes to working out solutions of more realistic situations. Glad to have some support about the cover..... As for the mimeo machine (stencil to British readers), well - I work at a grammar school..... Wish I got the paper and stencils free, though. **djt.

"Although I live in Baltimore, I can't get too enthusiastic about the Avalon Hill gamesI don't like playing with tiny cardboard counters which can get blown about when someone sneezes or jars the board."

**Anyone who reckons AH counters are bad in this respect should try those issued with the Poultron Press games. In fact, whenever possible, I put games onto pinboard to avoid just the difficulty Fred mentions. Jutland and Battle of Britain, as well as Diplomacy, are ideal for this. **djt

"Perhaps I like Diplomacy best because it's not really a combat game - it's really a political game. Since I majored in Political Science and minored in History and Economics, it's right down my alley. It's amazing how one can keep alive by using diplomacy when one is militarily weak. Do you live near Manchester or Liverpool? I can't find Timperley on my map."

**Timperley is about ten miles from Manchester, seventeen or so from Liverpool. Map-makers refuse to show it for some reason, but put Altrincham where Timperley should be. Perhaps this is because, in all respects except the publication of ALBION, Timperley has nothing to recommend it whatsoever. Pity. **djt

"Perhaps I'll be getting to England next summer. If so, I'll write to you to ask if there are any in-person Diplomacy games coming up."

**I hope you will find time to visit us, Fred, if you are making the trip. We can probably arrange face-to-face Diplomacy (at least a five-player variant). Incidentally, to all readers from the U.S.A. and elsewhere, if you are visiting England, there is always a welcome at 6 St. George's Avenue for a short or long stay. The one condition is that you must be prepared to talk wargaming etc. into the small hours. There are beds, too, if you ever manage to get to them.

This invitation has already been accepted three times this year, and Bob Johnson, Omar Dewitt and Michael Netheroot have all said how much they enjoyed getting away. So there you are. Next summer, the ALBION editor and his family hope to visit the East coast of the U.S.A. and we hope to meet as many people in the wargame world while there. Wargames, of course, include Diplomacy. **djt

Part of a letter from Michael Netheroot, 20 Moray Close, Rise Park, Romford, Essex.

"ALBION being British MUST be the best Diplomacy magazine on the market. Don't be coy. I think it's fantastic."

**Well, we try our best, but there are some excellent magazines published in the U.S.A., one of which is the subject of our review, starting on the next page. Added to this is the fact that ALBION is not really established yet, and this might all be a flash in the pan. Look what happened to poor old Hypertweeds, for instance. **djt

FOR SALE

(No, not Shakespeare again!) Any ALBION reader who is interested in films might like to see copies of SCREEN, a film society magazine published by Playhouse Films, with which I have a remote connection. Back issues contain a series of articles on various films, film techniques etc. and are available for 6d. (issues 1-15) and 9d (issues 16 and 17). A detailed account of contents appears later.

NO. 3 - LONELY MOUNTAIN etc.

As I said last time, everything's changing recently, and ~~that~~

HEMHEMHEM. LONELY MOUNTAIN is no exception. Until recently it was published solo by Charles Wells, 3021 Washington Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44118. As from issue 47, however, the magazine expanded to include five other sub-zines, plus letters etc., and the staff now consists of the following, together with the name of the sub-section which they each deal with.

Charles Wells, editor-in-chief. 'Double Cross' - a section devoted to PARLEMENT games, articles etc. plus Diplomacy.
David Johnston. 'Black Sands' - a journal of PARLEMENT.
Terry Kuch, Almoner. 'Thulcandra' - a journal devoted to regular Diplomacy games.
David Lindsay. 'Half 'n' Half' - a section containing both Diplomacy and PARLEMENT.
Sid Cochran. 'Orodruin' - Diplomacy.

I was a bit baffled on seeing the first issue of the 'new style' LONELY MOUNTAIN; why, thought I in my ignorance, should Charles have various sub-sections when they all apparently deal with two games only, Diplomacy and Parlement? Well, there is a good reason (there usually is when I don't know it). Each section is printed separately by the individual concerned, and everything then goes to Charles (usually) who duplicates all the material and assembles it for despatch. Each editor can therefore take on as many games, articles etc. as he personally can handle, which allows much more flexibility than would be obtained otherwise.

A brief history, covering the issues I have, might clarify the issue.

Issue 43 reported 3 Diplomacy games.

Issue 44 reported 3 Diplomacy games (1966A ended here).

Issue 45 reported 2 Diplomacy games and also the first session of a new Parlement game.

Issue 46 reported 2 Diplomacy games, one Parlement game, and announced the changes to take place with the next issue. Then came the change, and issue 47 was 20 pages (previous issues had averaged around 10). This issue contained two Diplomacy and two Parlement games in 'Double Cross', one Diplomacy game in 'Thulcandra', and one of each in 'Half 'N' Half'.

Issue 48 contained the Double Cross games, the 'Half 'N' Half' games plus one new Diplomacy game, and another new Diplomacy game in 'Orodruin'. The 'Thulcandra' game has been completed in issue 47.

Issue 49 is still on its way to me - right, Sid?
Issue 50 reaches 26 pages (closer spaced than ALBION, too),
and contains, all together, four Diplomacy games and four
Parlement games. In addition it contains a most interesting
series of articles, spread around the various sub-sections,
on both Diplomacy and Parlement.
Issue 50 also announces that in issue 51 will appear an
article on the history of LONELY MOUNTAIN. Perhaps I
should have read that first.....
It also contains the following, which I can't resist re-
printing.

NISREALLYRODMALKERJOHNBOARDMANISREALLYRODMALKERJOHNBOARDMANISR

I hope Charles and the other editors will forgive me for
reprinting this gem. British readers - you should have
read the correspondence in THE VOICE vol. III number 10 to
fully understand the jibe. Mad-slinging, but in a very
diplomatic way. Put it this way - if I printed

ITALYISREALLYMICHAELNETHERCOTTITALYISREALLYMICHAELNETHERCOTTITAL

you would get a clue.....

But I digress. I very much enjoyed the 'new' LONELY MOUNTAIN,
although the previous format could have tempted few complaints.
In particular the articles on PARLEMENT are enormously help-
ful to someone who, like me, is rather baffled by the rules,
or rather the method of using them in an actual game, and
Charles' articles and replies to letters throw new light
onto the scene. To learn a game such as this, it is very
useful indeed to be able to follow the various stages of the
game as it progresses.

There is plenty of humour in the pages, as well, which makes
for interesting reading. At one point a space is reserved
for obscenities, which wouldn't be a bad idea in ALBION some-
times. At another there is an appeal to 'Diplomacy New
Blood' to send 10 cents per issue in lieu of blood.

On the whole, then, very entertaining and interesting, and
particularly important reading for anyone who wants to get
the hang of Parlement. Thanks, Charles and Terry, for
getting the copies sent to me, and I'm looking forward to
receiving more.

British readers - this one is a must.

PARLEMENT ANYONE?

Which brings me to a request. For some time I have been
hoping to get a game of Parlement going in these pages, and
have sold (on behalf of Charles) enough copies of the rules
to make this possible. I wonder if there is a chance of
starting Parlement soon? Anyone interested please let me
know. At present this invitation is open to British players
only, since short deadlines are anticipated.
Copies of the rules are still available - price 10/- post paid.

ALBION Trades and Subscribers List.

The information below should be correct as at December 17th 1969. The list includes players in 69/1 and 69/2, with an account of game fees, postages etc. paid.

Symbols:- T. We have a trade agreement.
S. Subscriber.
P. Player in 69/1 and/or 69/2.
L. Subscription now lapsed.

1. Michael Nethercot (P). 20 Moray Close, Rise Park, Romford, Essex. Game fee fully paid. Postage includes issue 12.
2. John Munro (P,L). 14 New Lane, New Haven, Edinburgh EH6 4JE. Game fee half paid. Owes 2/4d.
3. Malcolm Watson (P). 3 Hawthorn Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire. Game fees fully paid. Copies by hand.
4. Colin Newcombe. (P). 115 Longdown Road, Congleton, Cheshire. Game fee fully paid. Copies by hand.
5. John Robertson. (P). Upper Dungalass, Arbroath Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1QN. Game fees fully paid. Postage includes issue 32.
6. Chris Hancock. (P). 17 Mallard Road, Chelmsford, Essex. Game fees fully paid. Postage includes issue 17 (assumes postage credit can go towards 69/2 game fee).
7. David Wood. (P). 60 Woodgate Avenue, Church Lawton, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 3EF Staffs. Game fee 69/1 fully paid. 69/2 fee still owing. Postage includes issue 22. (Not enough postage credit to extract 69/2 game fee; sorry, David!)
8. Rod Walker. (T). Note new address. 5058 Hawley Blvd., San Diego, California 92116, U.S.A.
9. John McCallum. (T). P.O.Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, Canada.
10. Jeff Key. (T). 4611 N. Pennsylvania, Apt. 1-D, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112, U.S.A.
11. Ray Evans. (P). 12 Mareth Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire. Game fee fully paid. Postage includes issue 29. 2d surplus.
12. Dick Holcombe. (S - T?). 45 Kimberlin Heights Drive, Oakland, California 94619, U.S.A. 1 dollar credit.
13. Bob Johnson. (S - T?). P.O. Box 134, Whippany, New Jersey, 07981, U.S.A.
14. Don Miller. (T). 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Maryland 20906, U.S.A.
15. Harry Tucker. (S,L). Paid for issues 1-6. Subscription temporarily lapsed. 22 Salisbury Road, Seaford, Sussex.
16. Bob Thomas. (P). 155 Coxford Road, Shirley Warren, Southampton SO1 6JX, Hants. Game fee fully paid. Postage includes issue 14.
17. Bob Stuart. (P). 3 Millwood Road, Orpington, Kent. Game fee fully paid. Postage includes issue 34. 4d surplus.
18. George Patton. (S). 1841 Suffolk Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221, U.S.A.
19. Eric Slack. (S). 26 Hartcroft Road, Bestwood Park Estate, Nottingham NG5 5JF. Subscription includes issue 12. 6d surplus.

Trades and Subscriber List (Cont).

20. Sheila Minion. (S). 7 Besley Close, Allsotree, Derby DE3 2PY.
Records misplaced! Sorry, Sheila, can you put me right? I think your subscription includes this issue, but no more. This could be wildly wrong - please advise.
21. Charles Wells. (S). 3021 Washington Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44118, U.S.A.
22. Terry Kuch. (T). 7554 Spring Lake Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20034, U.S.A.

That completes the list for the present. A revision will be printed in a future issue as circumstances demand. I have been approached by some more editors in the U.S.A. for trades, but at present have been forced to decline. It's not the paper - that's little cost - but the overseas mailing charges which make it impossible for me to consider more trades at present. I hope that the new overseas mailing policy, announced last issue, will ease the financial strain enough to allow new trades to be considered. However, until such time as the situation has been reviewed, I am reluctantly compelled to decline any new trades for the time being.

XX

SCREEN magazine.

At the foot of page 17 of this issue, I announced that back copies of this film society magazine are available, and promised a summary of contents for anyone interested. Before the summary - don't run away with the idea that this is a professional magazine, any more than is ALBION. It was originally produced for the benefit of members of our film society, and was primarily concerned with the films presented each show.

Issues 1-15 are stencil copies, 10"x4". These are 6d each. Issues 16 and 17 are offset copies; 16 is A4 size and 17 is half A4. These are 9d. each.

Summary of contents. (Each issue contains an editorial and 'club news', in addition to the articles mentioned below).

- Issue 1. 8 pages. Profiles of Sir Alec Guinness and Peter Sellers.
- Issue 2. 8 pages. Profile on Alfred Hitchcock. Reflections on the 'photographic process.'
- Issue 3. 12 pages. BLACKMAIL (Britain's first sound feature). BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN. Reflection part 2.
- Issue 4. 12 pages. THE SERVANT (Losey). PSYCHO (Hitchcock).
- Issue 5. 12 pages. An article on working as an extra in the television studios. THE BIRDS (technical article).
- Issue 6. 12 pages. JEAN-PAUL SATRE and HUIS CLOS. Dialogue on Cinema part 1. Trick effects in films part 1.
- Issue 7. 12 pages. REPULSION and PSYCHO - comparisons. Dialogue on Cinema part 2. Trick effects part 2.

- Issue 8. 12 pages. THE SILENCE (Bergman). Trick Effects part 3.
- Issue 9. 16 pages. Reprise - THE SILENCE. NORTH BY NORTH-WEST (Hitchcock). Trick effects part 4.
- Issue 10. 16 pages. 'What Is Censorship?' THE WAR GAME (Watkins). Trick effects part 5.
- Issue 11. 16 pages. 'The Viotimisation of Sex.' CAT BALLOU (two views). Trick effects part 6.
- Issue 12. 16 pages. 'Other Taboos.' ROMAN POLANSKI AND CUL-DE-SAC.
- Issue 13. 16 pages. FRENCH COMEDY and JACQUES TATI. The American Cinema. Trick effects part 7.
- Issue 14. 20 pages. LAST YEAR IN MARIENBAD (resnais). Trick effects part 8. Boris Karloff - an appreciation.
- Issue 15. 20 pages. BACK TO MARIENBAD. LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG (Demy). 'The Film Musical and Les Parapluies.' Trick effects part 9.
- Issue 16. 16 pages (new larger size). VIRIDIANA and LUIS BUNUEL. 'On Being Controversial'. 'Print That' - an article recounting experiences with a professional film unit. THE BOFORS GUN. PETER AND PAVLA.
- Issue 17. 22 pages. BONIFACE SOMNAMBULE (Fernandel). 'Filming in the Twenties' - an account of early amateur film-making. RELATIVITY (the film, not the science). TRANS-EUROP EXPRESS (Robbe-Grillet).

If any reader is interested in films, he should be able to find quite a lot to interest him in these issues. One added attraction - the covers are all individually designed by George Forster, who produced not only the outline for the 'normal' ALBION, but also the special cover you hold in your hands at present.

I hope that some of you will be interested in SCREEN, and will send copies post free (i.e. I will enclose them with your copy of ALBION).

Now, we pass on to the game reports and press releases. David Wood has confirmed that he is playing Austria in 69/2, and therefore the reserve player (whose identity can now be revealed as Colin Newcombe) has handed over the reins. The reason for David's failure to order his units last time was simple - that terrible thing which interferes with wargaming called work. David's firm had sent him to a remote corner of Cornwall, and persisted in moving him around so quickly and so unpredictably that no-one could contact him. This situation is now, thankfully, remedied, and David will be once more resident in Church Lawton by the time you read this.

Enough of the blather - down to the business.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/1.

A slight error has crept in; for the last two issues we have been reporting on the action (or lack of it) of a supposed Turkish army in Serbia. This should have been reported in Albania, Serbia still being in Austrian control. Apologies for this error (which luckily doesn't change anything) and thanks to John and Chris who pointed it out to me.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/1.

Autumn 1905.

Austria (Nethercot);	A(Ven) stands.	A(Tri) S A(Ven).
	A(Tyr) S A(Ven).	A(Vie)-Boh.
England (Munro);	No orders received.	<u>A(Edi) stands.</u>
France (Watson);	F(Cly)-Edi.	F(NTH) S F(Cly)-Edi.
	A(Yor) S F(Cly)-Edi.	A(Ruh) stands.
	A(Pie) stands.	F(Tus) S A(Pie).
	F(TYS)-IOS.	F(MAO)-NAO.
Germany (Newcombe);	F(Den) S French F(NTH).	A(Kie)-Mun.
	A(Ber)-Pru.	F(BAL) S A(Ber)-Pru.
	<u>A(Sil)-War.</u>	
Italy (Robertson);	F(Apu)-ADS.	A(Rom)-Nap.
	F(Tun) S French F(TYS)-IOS.	
Russia (Hancock);	A(Swe) stands.	F(GoB) S A(Swe).
	A(Pru)-War.	A(Gal) S A(Pru)-War.
	F(Nor) S F(NWG).	F(NWG) S F(Nor).
	A(StP) S F(Nor).	
Turkey(Wood);	F(Smy)-AES.	F(IOS)-Apu.
	A(Gre) stands.	A(Bul) stands.
	A(Alb) stands.	

The English A(Edi) is displaced and retreats to Liverpool.

Notation:

Underlined moves fail. NAO=North Atlantic.

Builds.

Austria controls:-	Vie, Tri, Bud, Ser, Ven.	Builds 1 for 5.
England controls:-	Edi , Lpl.	No change for 1.
France controls:-	Par, Bre, Mar, Por, Bel, Spa, Lon,	
	Edi , Edi.	No change for 8.
Italy controls:-	Edi , Rom, Nap, Tun.	No change for 3.
Germany controls:-	Ber, Kie, Mun, Den, Hol.	No change for 5.
Russia controls:-	Mos, War, StP, Swe, Rum, Nor, Sev.	
		No change for 7.
Turkey controls:-	Ank, Smy, Con, Gre, Bul.	No change for 5.

DEADLINE FOR WINTER 1905 BUILDS IS:-

Monday January 12th 1970.

Carbon-copy notification as usual.

XXXXX

69/1 PRESS RELEASES.

From the German Press:-

Once again units of the German army are looking forward to the delights of a Polish rest camp. Not only are we confident of eventually throwing the invader from our Holy German soil, but also that we shall wrest territory from him, with the loyal co-operation of our allies. Soon the Russian Bear will be nothing more than a very expensive fur coat. We delight in the victories of our Austro-Hungarian allies, and anticipate the time when we shall make German the common language and heritage of the whole of central Europe. The German press has given equal space to these and our own Silesian campaign.

Bülow.

From the Austrian Press:-

In response to an overwhelming appeal we are NOT repeat NOT going to continue our publication of Scottish Poetry. So there, M. de Gaul - put that in your and it. May we state quite positively that we think M. de Gaul is the nicest, most upstanding, generous and good-looking chap we have ever had the pleasure to meet. That he also happens to be a rogue, writes fantastic articles about Austria which are untrue and deliberate falsifications, is merely beside the point.

As an innocent bystander, looking with interest at 69/2, we trust that the good name of Austria will be preserved. Once I know who is at the helm in Vienna I will (without charge) be perfectly willing to give him, her or it my competent and expert advice.

We have decided not to bore you with a summary of our recent military achievements. Deeds speak louder than words. We are fully aware of the perils ahead and repeat our assurances that we remain firm in our resolve to stand by our friends. At that point we close. May 1970 bring you all you deserve.

From the French Press:-

Paris. In the French capital, citizens of Le Republique de Gaul celebrate Xmas with great spirit (mainly imported Scotch), secure in the knowledge that their homeland is at last safe from attack by their foes. As usual, on the stroke of 10.00 (chucking-out time in Scotland), His Holiness the Emperor of France delivered a fine Xmas speech from the Lounge Bar of the Castle in Edinburgh.

He started with the usual Royal Salute. Fortunately no-one present took offence. "It is with great joy that I celebrate here tonight the liberation of Scotland from English misrule, and I am very pleased that French forces had a hand in this. Although the English troops have been defeated, we shall not rest until they are wiped out. I have instructed forces to

pursue them into Liverpool and effect their destruction. However our first task is to push Russia back to her home wastes, and all units of the French Navy will be instructed to engage any Russian naval force on sight."

The Emperor went on to make light of the Russian naval offensive. "As for Russia's pathetic attempt to dislodge our fleet in the North Sea, it is to be laughed at; the Tzar need have no fear of French feet getting wet."

Commenting on the rumours that Russia was training a large number of submariners, he said "I would suggest the Tzar train all his sailors in underwater sailing, since that is where all his ships will soon be."

He continued:- "It is good to see our German allies on the offensive again. I'm sure we will work well together in our Spring offensive. Fortunes down South are still mixed. However we would seem to have stopped Austrian forces in their tracks and the French Fifth Fleet has driven the Turkish Grand Fleet out of the Ionian Sea. We are at last taking the initiative here, and it will not be long now before our foes are begging for peace. I am somewhat amazed at Turkey's alleged surprise that the Franco-Italian pact would not be broken. Did I not tell this to all Europe at the outbreak of war? The only people who have doubted my word are those opposed to me in a conflict of their own making, and this doubt is feigned to cast a shadow over my good name. To those good people who wrote on my behalf in these pages, I have granted a Royal Pardon - they will be released immediately their sentence has been served." The Emperor ended his speech with a Highland Fling, revealing to all present his great talent.

From the Italian Press:-

Rome. It is with deep regret that, in view of the recent appeals by the overworked and underpaid editor, printer, type-setter, office boy, proof-reader and general factotum of the august and ever interesting popular magazine ALBION, we have to announce that there has been a strict censorship imposed upon all news releases from Italy. We have no doubt that the verbose and eloquant (not Mary, Charles) will amply substitute for any lack of Italian news in his usual long-winded manner.

Venice. Today the starving, ragged Austrian troops.....CENSORED.

Apulia.gallant Italian soldiers. The glorious Italian Navy.....CENSORED.....triffling little Austrian paddle-steamers.

**All the remaining Presses of the world are silent; no doubt Christmas cheer has something to do with this. In fact, we had decided to whittle down press releases this time, since so much time was available for preparation of the magazine that two pages of news were deemed sufficient. As it turns out, this has only really affected one player, and apologies to him for omitting a few lines of his release. Will he be mad?????*

Page 26.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/2.

Autumn 1901.

Austria (Wood);	A(Tri) stands. A(Ser) stands.	A(Bud) stands.
England (Hancock);	F(NTH)-Nor. F(NWG) S F(NTH)-Nor.	A(Edi)-Yor.
France (Evans);	F(MAO)-Por. A(Pic) S A(Bur)-Bel.	A(Bur)-Bel.
Germany (Stuart);	F(Den) stands. A(Ruh)-Mun.	A(Kie)-Hol.
Italy (Watson);	A(Ven) stands. F(IOS) C A(Nap)-Tun.	A(Nap)-Tun.
Russia (Robertson);	A(StP)-Swe. F(GoB) C A(StP)-Swe.	F(Rum) stands. A(Ukr) S F(Rum).
Turkey (Thomas);	F(BLA) S A(Con)-Bul. A(Bul)-Gre.	A(Con)-Bul.

Notation:-

C=convoys.

S=Supports.

Underlined moves fail. Hello, why the

***** do I bother?.....

Builds.

Austria controls:-	Tri, Bud, Vie, Ser.	Builds 1 for 4.
England controls:-	Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nor.	Builds 1 for 4.
France controls:-	Par, Mar, Bre, Bel, Por.	Builds 2 for 5.
Germany controls:-	Ber, Mun, Kie, Den, Hol.	Builds 2 for 5.
Italy controls:-	Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun.	Builds 1 for 4.
Russia controls:-	Mos, War, Sev, StP, Swe, Rum.	Builds 2 for 6.
Turkey controls:-	Con, Smy, Ank, Bul, Gre.	Builds 2 for 5.

Spain alone remains neutral.

DEADLINE FOR WINTER 1901 BUILDS:-

Monday January 12th 1970.

Carbon copy notification as usual.

XXXXXX

69/2 Press Releases.

From the Russian Press:-

According to the various treaties which exist with the Ruling Powers of Europe, and as was announced in an earlier statement, all Russian troops have moved back from the frontiers. We have graciously permitted Austria and Turkey to enter peacefully the troubled areas of the Balkans, where they are each seeking reparations for destruction caused to their respective territories by bands of Serbian and Bulgarian bandits.

The violent attack by the English Press upon our Government has come as a great shock to the nation, as we have just finished signing a treaty with England, guaranteeing her Navy the use of all Russian ports in the Gulf of Bosnia, the Black Sea, and all other seas within Russian territorial waters.

From the German Press:-

The Kaiser may at any time stop nesting.

The Kaiser's household reports that Spaghetti is no longer used in the house. There is no political implication in this ban.

In a further statement by the housekeeper it was stated 'there just isn't enough water with it these days.' She also denied finding a dingle-dangle hairy thing, made of leather, in the Kaiser's dustbin. She stated - 'He never threw away any presents from any warlike tribe - even the most northerly ones.'

In spite of France's warlike noises the German army continued its ping-pong tournament, and the children played in Heligoland. Bear fur is very popular with the Ladies of Berlin this year.

Many Berliners now get a joyful, warm feeling from the 'Awful' fur. This proves our trade agreement with Russia works.

It is confidentially reported from the cellars of the Kaiser's Palace that French wines are no longer drunk at the Kaiser's table. The Kaiser is said to have told his cellarman that

French wines are not maturing properly this year. He added - 'We shall no longer import these young wines, and the Burgandy will be sent back.'

The German people are already collecting warm woolies to comfort Italian sailors, when Italian ships are sunk in the Mediterranean by gentle storms and soft winds.....

From the Italian Press:-

Due to the tendency of certain countries to distort facts in their press releases, the Italian Government has declined the gracious offer of space in the pages of ALBION for the time being. We may, however, take advantage of this offer at a later date. However before this could be done, there would have to be a new cover for the magazine - possibly an Italian hat to replace that lump of metal at present dominating the front page.

The Italian Government extends the hand of friendship to one and all.

****Next issue, the cover will be back to normal. djt****

From the Turkish Press:-

Some weeks have passed since my last dispatch, and much has happened in that time. The two armies based in Western Turkey have poured across the Dardenelles into the Balkans, and initial battles seem to have gone well if somewhat slowly. It is to be assumed that Turkey is taking the opportunity of a general European War to regain that part of her Empire lost so long ago.

Also, from my hotel, the Turkish fleet can be seen giving support to the armies in the Balkans, and many nights recently have been rent with the noise of gunfire as the heavy guns of the Turkish ships have been used to destroy Bulgarian strong-points.

It has also been said that units of one of the two Turkish armies have attempted to enter Greece, but no confirmation has been received from Turkish Government circles (although rumours are rife that Russia has promised support to the army in Bulgaria if this is so). This will of course release the Turkish fleet from its present duties to support the Greece Expeditionary Force.

Of course, while all this has been going on here, reports have been received of activity elsewhere. The Italian Fleet has been reported in the Ionian Sea, and it is being debated whether it will seek battle with the Austro-Hungarian Fleet, with its powerful Dreadnought squadron.

Anyway, it is hoped that the present conflagration will soon cease, and peace once again reign.

From the French Press:-

NEWSPAPER STRIKE - WORKERS WANT MORE WORK, LESS PAY!

We have received no news from England and Austria. djt

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Well, that's it once again, and ALBION goes into double figures. I read in the latest GAMESLETTER that Graustark is close to publishing its 200th issue! (Editor - John Boardman). The Novices of ALBION issue their most hearty congratulations to the experts of the Graustark staff.

Next issue is likely to be sizeable again. As a preview, here are just some of the things you may expect to find:-

John McCallum on the Victory Criterion.

Don Miller on Miller's Rule.

The complete rules of ABSTRACTION - the Davis-Walker variant.

Prof. Thing on Games Theory (Won't someone try the homework, for a change?????)

A cartoon (hopefully - the artist was overcome with Christmas cheer this time).

AND THE USUAL ASSEMBLY OF MISCELLANEOUS NONSENSE.....